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Friday, October 28, 2016

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Action Item Calendar

Today (October 28): [October 1 Enrollment Census Submission & Snapshot Reports - Due](#)

Sunday (October 30): [EL categorical](#) funding plans due

Monday (October 31): [EL performance](#) reports due
December 9 – [Textbook](#)-verification forms due

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. NAEP science results released

Yesterday the National Center on Education Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education released the results of the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science assessments.

These assessments are administered every other year to students in grades 4, 8, and 12 in almost all states.

The NAEP report – sometimes called The Nation’s Report Card – shows that Rhode Island results fall 1 percentage point below the national average in both grade 4 and grade 8:

Percent proficient or better - 2015

	R.I.	USA
Grade 4	36	37
Grade 8	32	33

(Grade-12 results are reported at the national level only.)

The report also shows that Rhode Island results are improving over time:

- up 2 points in grade 4, up 6 points in grade 8 (since 2009); and
- up 2 points in grade 8 since 2011.

(The 2011 results were reported for grade 4 only.)

These improvements in Rhode Island results essentially mirror improvements at the national level.

This year we see some improvement among students groups, especially among Hispanic students, whose percent proficient improved by 5 points in grade 4 and by 6 points in grade 8. Achievement gaps, however, are about 20 points for Hispanic students and remain wide for all student groups.

These NAEP results essentially match the grade-4 results of the Rhode Island state science assessment (NECAP) that we released last month.

For grade 8, however, these NAEP results show somewhat better news than the NECAP results: a higher percentage of students attained proficiency or better (32 percent, compared with 19 percent on NECAP), and results have improved by 2 points over the past 4 years (whereas NECAP grade-8 results declined by 4 points).

With these results in mind, our key goals and objectives toward improving student outcomes in science are:

- increasing teacher understanding of and capacity in inquiry-based science instruction;
- communicating the vision of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to district leadership as well as to classroom teachers; and
- developing NGSS-aligned assessments, including performance tasks.

Next month I will meet with the Rhode Island science educators' leadership team to discuss their view of the state of science instruction in Rhode Island, our shared vision for science instruction going forward, and the tools and resources educators need to make our vision a reality.

2. Reminder: Postsecondary Office launches initiative to promote completion of FAFSA college-aid applications

In case you missed it last week, please see this message from the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner:

It's FAFSA time! Nationally, 85 percent of students are eligible for federal financial aid for college, but only 45 percent of high-school seniors complete the FAFSA before high-school graduation. The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) is leading a [state-wide initiative](#) to promote FAFSA completion and access to financial aid for college, and we are inviting high schools and districts across Rhode Island to participate. As part of the U.S. Department of Education's [FAFSA Completion Initiative](#), state student grant agencies, including RIOPC, may provide participating secondary schools, school districts, and certain designated entities with limited data about students' progress in completing and filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which most colleges and universities require for financial aid. Since the initiative began in 2014, our office has worked with schools and districts to help more than 1,900 additional students complete their FAFSAs. There is no cost associated with participating in this program.

If you are interested in partnering with RIOPC in the FAFSA Completion Initiative or have any questions about the initiative, you can contact Michael Joyce, Director of Grants and Scholarships, Division of Higher Education Assistance (michael.joyce@riopc.edu, 736-1172).

From RIDE

ESSA:

- 3. Reminder: RIDE schedules 5 community forums on Every Student Succeeds Act**

As we prepare to transition to the new federal law – the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – RIDE will hold community forums next month to collect public feedback and input about how we can fulfill our vision for every student. Students, parents, teachers, community members, and community leaders across the state: You are invited to share experiences to help inform the ESSA implementation plan for Rhode Island.

We will hold five forums at locations across Rhode Island:

- Providence Area: Wednesday (November 2), at Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex, 182 Thurbers Ave., Providence (Spanish-language interpretation services are available.)
- Northern Rhode Island: Wednesday, November 9, at Lincoln Middle School, 152 Jenckes Hill Rd.
- West Bay: Monday, November 14, at Coventry High School, 40 Reservoir Rd.
- East Bay: Thursday, November 17, at Portsmouth High School, 120 Education Lane
- Southern Rhode Island: Monday, November 21 at South Kingstown High School, 215 Columbia St., Wakefield

All forums will take place from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

These forums will be open to everyone. All are welcome, but to reserve a spot at any of the forums you can use this link:

www.ride.ri.gov/ESSA-Forum

Come lend your voice to advance Rhode Island schools!

Printable and shareable flyers about these forums can be found at www.ride.ri.gov/ESSA. For more information about these community forums, please contact Felicia.Brown@ride.ri.gov or 222-8182.

Assessments:

4. RIDE adopts new extended-time policy for PARCC assessments

Feedback from the field suggests that some students who are not eligible to receive extended testing time under the current PARCC policy could benefit from having extra time for PARCC testing. To provide flexibility and to reduce student stress, RIDE is establishing a Rhode Island-specific policy for extended time on PARCC assessments. As a reminder, the *current* PARCC consortium extended-time policy, which applies only to students with disabilities and to English Learners, has *not* changed and these students will continue to be able to take full advantage of the PARCC-consortium extended-time policy.

Here is an overview of the new Rhode Island extended-time policy for PARCC assessments:

The Rhode Island extended time policy is specifically designed for students *without* an IEP or 504 or who are *not* English Learners.

Students may be provided up to 50 percent extended time for *each* PARCC testing unit. For example, if the unit testing time is 90 minutes, then the student can be given up to 45 additional minutes to complete testing. Once the additional 50-percent extended time has expired, students must stop testing. No additional time will be allowed.

As always, schools should still designate a *separate* testing location for students identified for extended time so that their testing will not be disrupted.

Students *should* still be identified for extended time *before* testing begins, and the decision should be made by a team of educators familiar with the student, including the student (as appropriate) and his or her parents or guardians; however, for those students who were *not* identified in advance, schools must follow the same protocol (see below) used for other students with extended time and also document the use of this accommodation.

Each case in which the extended-time accommodation has been assigned to a student must be documented in the PARCC Student Registration/PNP file in [PearsonAccess^{next}](#). RIDE has designated *Column AI (State Field 6)* in the PARCC Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) file for LEAs to document all students identified locally to receive extended time under this new policy. Simply put, the letter “Y” in *Column AI* for each student (*without* an IEP or 504 Plan and *not* identified as an English Learner) who required extended time to complete one or more PARCC testing units. Leave this column blank for all other students.

Note: For students with disabilities or for English Learners, LEAs will continue to document the extended time accommodation in the Student Registration/PNP file’s “Timing and Scheduling Accommodations for English Learners and Students with Disabilities” section (refer to student registration/PNP resources available in PearsonAccess^{next} under the “Support” tab and “Documentation” link).

As a reminder, *this policy applies only to the PARCC assessments*. The extended time policy for NECAP Science testing remains the same as it always has been for students in Rhode Island: All students are eligible for extended time (up to a full school day), irrespective of whether they have an IEP or 504 Plan or are identified as an English Learner. As with all other accommodations for the NECAP Science assessments, any student who needs extended time during testing must have this accommodation documented on page 2 of the student-answer document.

For additional guidance on this new policy or if you have any questions about the extended-time accommodation, please contact Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley (222-8494 or Kevon.Tucker-Seeley@ride.ri.gov).

Instruction:

5. Deadline for Math, Science Partnerships grant applications extended to November 9

The deadline for the submission of applications for the Mathematics and Science Partnerships grant, *Enhancing Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Skills of K-5 Educators in the Next Generation Science Standards*, has been extended to 4 p.m. on **November 9**. Click on this link to the RIDE website to access the MSP Grant documents and 2017 MSP Grant Informational Power point:

www.ride.ri.gov/Science

If you have questions about this grant, contact Simone Palmer, at simone.palmer@ride.ri.gov or 222-8413.

6. Online science modules, resources available on RIDEmap

Online modules on the Next Generation Science Standards along with a Facilitator Guide and supplemental resources are now available to all Rhode Island educators through the [RIDEmap](#) portal. These modules were designed to be used as an online community of practice or as part of a school or district professional-development program. To access the modules and resources, please log into [RIDEmap](#), select the link to the Integrating Practices Online Modules on the right side of the page, and click on the Science Modules or Resources tab. For questions on these modules, please email Simone Palmer, at simone.palmer@ride.ri.gov.

Legal:

7. RIDE posts Commissioner's decisions on residential-treatment programs, group-employment contracts

RIDE has posted two Commissioner's decisions:

The Foster-Glocester regional school district is financially and educationally responsible for a child who, for non-educational reasons, was placed in a 24-hour-per-day residential treatment program at the Harmony Hill School, by the Rhode Island Family Court:

<http://www2.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2016/021-16 DCYF v. Foster Glocester RE D. 10212016.pdf>.

An elementary-school principal had: (1) waived her right to challenge the non-renewal of her group-employment contract by failing to appeal the relevant school committee action; and (2)

was estopped from challenging the validity of her new individual contract after accepting the salary and benefits provided under the new contract while on paid leave.

<http://www2.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2016/022-16 Cheryl Gibbs v E.Prov. 10242016.pdf>.

Meetings:

8. Council to meet Tuesday with expected votes on school construction, English Learners, educator certification

The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education will meet **Tuesday** (November 1) at 5:30 p.m. in Room 501 at RIDE, 80 Washington St./255 Westminster St., Providence. We will [post](#) the agenda this afternoon. It is anticipated that the Board will vote on the approval for public review and comment of regulations governing the education of English Learners, approval of School Building Authority capital-fund projects, and approval of revisions to the regulations on educator certification.

From the U.S. Department of Education (USED)

9. USED awards SIG grants to states; R.I. received \$1.4 million

On Tuesday [the U.S. Department of Education](#) today announced more than \$427 million in [School Improvement Grants \(SIG\)](#) to help turn around America's persistently lowest-achieving schools in nearly every state and U.S. territory.

The USED awards grants to states, which then award competitive sub-grants to school districts that demonstrate the greatest need for the

funds and the strongest commitment to substantially raising student achievement in the lowest-performing schools. States are also given flexibility to develop their own state-determined intervention model that focuses on whole-school reform and is designed to improve student achievement. In schools that have received funds under this program, up to 80 percent of students are from low-income families – 28 percentage points higher than the average school.

Since 2009, the SIG program has invested over \$7 billion to transform more than 1,800 of the country's lowest performing schools. While this is the last year that the USED will award funds under the current program, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), continues this work. Consistent with the Administration's SIG program, ESSA requires that states identify and support the lowest-performing schools, including schools that are failing to graduate one-third or more of their students or where subgroups of students are falling behind, and to implement evidence-based interventions to turn around these schools. To support this critical work, ESSA also requires that states set aside funds under Title I specifically for these schools to invest in activities that we know support low-performing students and low-achieving schools, similar to SIG.

Rhode Island received \$1,442,735 in SIG grants, which we will use toward the transformation of our struggling schools (Focus and Priority Schools).

From other state offices and agencies

- 10. Secretary of State Nellie M. Gorbea encourages schools to participate in the National Student/Parent Mock Election**

The National Student/Parent Mock Election is underway and voting will continue until **Thursday** (November 3), National Mock Election Day. Interested educators can find comprehensive program information and teacher guides [here](#). The guides, updated for 2016, offer discussion points on the issues of democracy, immigration, the economy, and “Liberty and Justice for All.” The curriculum also offers special emphasis on civil discourse.

Sixty national civic, educational, religious, and business organizations serve as cooperating organizations and partners, including the National Association of Broadcasters Education Foundation and the PTA. In addition, the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals are also supporting the mock-election project.

To participate, register online at <http://nationalmockelection.org>. For more information, email Gloria Kirshner, president of National Student/Parent Mock Election, at nspme@aol.com.

11. URI lecture series on energy research begins Wednesday

Join the URI Extension Outreach Center for the second annual Plugged into URI Energy Research lecture series. Including representatives from the Office of Energy Resources, Deep Water Wind, and the URI Department of Ocean Engineering and the Harrington School of Communications and Media to learn about the first offshore wind farm installed in the U.S., off the coast of Block Island.

The first lecture, “The Winds of Change: Ocean Energy Generation in Rhode Island,” will take place on Wednesday (November 2), at 6 p.m.:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/324769817889372/>

Visit the following link to learn about the entire lecture series:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/2016urienergylectureseries>

From other organizations

12. Hasbro launches initiative to empower children to have empathy, compassion, courage

Yesterday Hasbro, Inc., launched [BE FEARLESS BE KIND](#), its largest philanthropic initiative ever, designed to empower kids to have the empathy, compassion, and courage to stand up for others and be inclusive throughout their lives. This initiative builds upon the work that Hasbro and the Hasbro Children's Fund have been doing with [generationOn](#), the youth-service division of Points of Light.

"We know the amazing difference kids can make by putting empathy into action through service, and we've seen how that work changes them, giving them confidence and a greater sense of purpose," said Karen Davis, Hasbro's Senior Vice President of Global Philanthropy and Social Impact, and President of the Hasbro Children's Fund. "BE FEARLESS BE KIND features resources, partnerships, and campaigns with the common goal of creating a generation of kids who include everyone, appreciate differences, and experience the feeling of fulfillment that comes with making a difference."

The core elements of BE FEARLESS BE KIND are dedicated to teaching empathy, putting empathy into action, and celebrating kind kids who serve as positive role models and changemakers.

“We recognize that empathy is a critical social skill that impacts our youth and our world,” said Brian Goldner, Hasbro’s Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer. “Hasbro has always been committed to standing up for children, and we are pleased to be using our resources to help address this important issue.”

Teaching Empathy

To help nurture empathy and compassion, parents and adults can access proven tools and resources through an online hub, www.BEFEARLESSBEKIND.com:

- The website features a curated toolkit with best-in-class materials developed by [Ashoka](#), the world’s largest network of changemakers and social innovators.
- A custom series of [mindfulness videos](#) offers adults and their children the opportunity to practice meditation focused on inspiring kindness and empathy.
- Third-party resources, including book recommendations and articles, provide additional information and inspiration for parents and educators interested in nurturing empathy.

Putting Empathy into Action

As part of the initiative, Hasbro and its partners offer a variety of programs throughout the year to help kids put empathy into action:

- The first new program to launch was generationOn’s [Rules of Kindness](#) campaign, which invited kids and teens to create their own “rules of kindness” and a plan to put them into action. The campaign, which ran September 1 through October 17, inspired more than 110,000 youth from eight countries to share their rules and action plans.

- Starting in November, Hasbro and generationOn will be hosting the seventh annual Joy Maker Challenge, encouraging youth to spread joy and kindness to people in need during the holidays. For every kid engaged in service throughout the [Joy Maker Challenge](#) between November 21 and December 23, Hasbro will donate a toy or game to Toys for Tots (up to \$1 million). To date, more than 950,000 total acts of service have been completed.
- Hasbro proudly supports [NO BULLY](#), an evidence-based program that leverages student empathy to prevent and stop bullying in schools and in after-school programs. Hasbro brought this approach to the school district in Pawtucket, where its corporate headquarters are located, as well as to schools across the U.S. through an innovative [AmeriCorps](#) partnership. In addition, Peace Summit projects, designed by NO BULLY and featured on the BE FEARLESS BE KIND website, help educators involve students in reducing bullying in schools and promoting peace.

Two new global partnerships with Special Olympics and Creative Vision's Rock Your World have been established to help develop empathy and compassion in kids around the world:

- [Special Olympics Unified Schools](#) program facilitates sports and education initiatives of Special Olympics in schools to foster respect and dignity for people with intellectual disabilities, change actions and attitudes among peers without intellectual disabilities, and promote social inclusion for all.

- [Creative Vision's Rock Your World](#) inspires middle- and high-school students globally to change their world through the use of media. To date, more than 600,000 students in 25,000 schools have used their free curriculum to make a difference around issues they care about.

Celebrating Kind Kids

BE FEARLESS BE KIND recognizes and celebrates kids who are making a positive difference:

- For the past seven years, Hasbro has recognized [Hasbro Community Action Heroes](#) who embody empathy, kindness, and leadership as they serve their community through volunteerism. The ten 2016 Heroes, who will be announced on Tuesday, will receive an educational scholarship in honor of their work.
- Through its partnership with the Special Olympics Unified Schools program, Hasbro will also recognize one student in each of the areas where it has U.S. offices: Rhode Island, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Miami, with the Hasbro Kindness Award for extraordinary empathetic leadership.

Hasbro employees are also bringing empathy-building activities to the communities where they live and work through Team Hasbro, the company's employee volunteer program, which enjoys an 89-percent participation rate.

To learn more about Hasbro's BE FEARLESS BE KIND initiative, visit www.BEFEARLESSBEKIND.com.

13. Summit scheduled on preparing students for careers in health care

The healthcare industry is the largest employer in Rhode Island. In an effort to fill the high-demand jobs in this industry, research shows that we must begin to develop the pipeline in early school years.

On **November 15**, leaders in health-care education, healthcare practice, and secondary-school educators will convene at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, in Warwick, for a focused half-day summit, hosted by the Future of Nursing – Rhode Island Action Coalition, with the goal of *Advancing Health Career Education in Rhode Island Schools*.

The summit is designed for middle-school and high-school mathematics teachers, science teachers, guidance counselors, and school principals. Health-industry leaders and experts will share current information regarding the following topics:

- high-demand healthcare career opportunities;
- the skills and educational pathways required for success in these roles, including curriculum pathways;
- specific pedagogies and skills that can be taught and integrated immediately into real classroom settings; and
- mentorship, internship, and immersion practices that have shown promise in preparing students for successful college and career pathways in healthcare.

Healthcare employers and practice partners will be at this event to begin the dialogue that fosters important and necessary connections and relationships between schools and healthcare providers.

Come and learn about how you can participate in making a career in healthcare become a reality for students!

Registration and breakfast begin at 7:45 a.m., and the event program begins at 8:30 a.m. The program will end at 12:30 p.m.

To register, go to AdvancingRIHealth.com/register.

For questions about this summit or to learn how you can sponsor the summit, email FutureofNursingRI@gmail.com.

14. Personal Finance education conference scheduled for December 10 at RIC

The annual [Free Financial Capability Conference](#), coordinated by [RI Jump\\$tart](#), will be held on Saturday, December 10, at Rhode Island College, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Register through this link:

<https://goo.gl/Q5sb8o>

If you have taken a Personal Finance related course or would like to share your perspective about the state of personal-finance education in Rhode Island, then sign up to be part of a student panel at the Saturday, December 10, Financial Capability Conference at Rhode Island College. Participation is limited.

Students sign up for the panel, at:

<https://goo.gl/forms/QV24dG40yxBzGg962>

The panel will from 2 - 2:45 p.m.; however, you are encouraged to join us for all or part of the day, including lunch, which will be a time for you meet the panel moderators and network with industry leaders and elected officials.

Questions? Students are encouraged to email Isabella (Catherine) Gentil, at cgentil458@student.egsd.net.

Adult educators with questions may email Dr. Margaret Brooks, at rhodeislandjumpstart@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you on December 10, as we continue to build financial capability and capacity in the Rhode Island education space.

15. Hands-on STEAM workshops to be offered in North Kingstown on November 9

The 2nd Annual STEAMing Ahead Hands-On Workshops, a free event, will take place at North Kingstown High School 150 Fairway Drive, on **November 9**, from 5 – 9 p.m. All parents and students from grades 6 through 12 in North Kingstown and surrounding communities are invited.

Join us for an evening of hands-on workshops topics that include: Pen Turning, Squid Communication, Biomedical Illustration, Coding with Electronics, Boat Building, Raspberry Pi Universe, Cannibalizing Technology, Robot Picasso, and more. Congressman James Langevin will be the keynote speaker.

To register, go to:

<https://goo.gl/Ry8EYN>

16. DownCity Design offers free fellowships for teachers interested in project-based instruction; deadline, November 18

[DownCity Design](#) is offering a free professional-development series for Rhode Island educators beginning in January. The Innovative Educator fellowship will bring together teachers from across Rhode Island interested in using Design Thinking to guide their students through project-based investigations in science, social studies, language arts, and more. Innovative Educator fellows will gather five times over the course of the school year to develop and test hands-on, standards-aligned curricula that create meaningful and fun learning experiences. The application deadline is **November 18**. To learn more and apply, please click [here](#).

17. Write Rhode Island contest deadline is December 10; short-story workshops scheduled

Rhode Island students are invited to participate in the short-fiction competition presented by School One and Goat Hill; the deadline is **December 10**. For details, click [here](#).

The Newport Art Museum will host a four-part workshop that offers students an introduction to short stories, Rhode Island history, and a private tour of the Newport Art Museum and Redwood Library. Workshops will be held on November 7, 14, 21 and 28, at 3:30 p.m. Please call Maggie, at that Newport Art Museum, to sign up, at 848-1000.

The Barrington Public Library will host *Introduction to Short Story Writing with Max Winter* on **Tuesday, Thursday**, and November 3, 10 and 17, at 6 p.m. Call Tanya, at 247-1920, to sign up.

School One is hosting a special workshop on Wednesday, November 9, at 3:30 p.m. Please register with Diana, at School One, at 331-2497 or dianac@school-one.org.

For a complete list of workshops across Rhode Island including Cumberland, Johnston, Scituate, and more visit www.school-one.org.

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/FieldMemos.aspx>